

POPLAR FOREST

Lynchburg vicinity

If any great American deserves to be commemorated by two houses, Thomas Jefferson certainly does. Poplar Forest was his “other home,” which he designed and built to serve as a villa retreat once he left the presidency. An octagonal brick house, it was begun in 1805 and represents the culmination of his mature architectural style. He once described it as “the best dwelling house in the state, except for Monticello,” then went on to posit that it was perhaps preferable because it was better proportioned to the needs of a private citizen. The house remained in private ownership until the 1980s, when the Corporation for Jefferson’s Poplar Forest purchased it. Poplar Forest, currently being restored to the most exacting professional standards, is open to the public.